

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Fran Lartigue, David Travis, Carl Stewart, Bonnie Silvers, Maryellen Brown, Marcella Bush, Dennis Sears, Bob Law, Charles Flynn

Absent:

Administration: Superintendent Hastings, Christine Regan

Press: CTSB, Cory Wiley – Berkshire Record,

Student Representatives: Mary Shalaby, Angus Kerr

Others: Karen Chamberland, Karen Frighetto, Tara White, Charles Ketchen, Sandi Hubbard, Marianne Dodds, Marya Makuc, Robert Miller, Mary Turo, Kerry Burke, Neal Barbieri, Dan Lanoue, Patrick Barrett, Dallas Jones, Jamie Foster, Emily Law, Alissa Rathburn, Karen Blodgett, Sarah Siket, Tim Schwartz, Andrew Rapport, Mary Shalaby, Angus Kerr, Ingrid Borwick

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Stewart called meeting #1522 to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** *Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to approve the minutes of meetings #1520 and #1521 as submitted. It was so voted, unanimously.*
3. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE PERTAINING TO THIS EVENING'S AGENDA ITEMS**
  - A. Student Representative Report: Presented later in the meeting.
4. **BUSINESS:**
  - A. Approval of Overnight Hiking Field Trips "Man & His Environment" – Patrick Barrett
    - March 13 to March 14 – The overnight trip was cancelled. This will be just a day trip.Mr. Barrett gave a brief description of the hike and the area that will be covered.  
*Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Flynn, to approve the overnight hiking trips as follows:*
    - April 2 to April 4, 2017 – AT from Tyringham to Cross Blotz – 3 day hike
    - May 7 to May 10, 2017 – AT from N. Adams to Pittsfield Rd – 4 day hike*It was so voted unanimously.*
  - B. Final Approval of the Mt. Everett Regional HS Band Trip to Tennessee for Festivals of Music Competition (April 4 to April 9, 2017)  
*Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, to approve the Mt. Everett Regional HS Band Trip to Tennessee as presented. It was so voted unanimously.*

Mr. Sears asked the Chair to modify the agenda and address the subcommittee reports of Finance and Building, Grounds and Technology Subcommittee reports now. Mr. Stewart agreed.

F. b. Building, Grounds and Technology Subcommittee:

Mr. Flynn reported that the Building, Grounds & Technology subcommittee had met last night and agreed to spend \$390,000. They are still waiting on guidance as to what amount can be used for maintenance to the buildings, for example the repair to the tennis courts. Not sure if the repair can be applied towards the 50% of the foundation budget. This is related to the MSBA project.

a. Finance Subcommittee:

Dennis Sears reported that the Finance Subcommittee had met a couple of times to work on reducing the budget. The new budget incorporates a reduction of about \$400,000 (a combination of reduced expenses, taking \$100,000 out of E&D, staff cuts, salaries and benefits, and suspending the program at Egremont School for this fall).

Mr. Flynn asked how this could be done without the approval of the Town of Egremont Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Stewart explained that if this move happens it will happen per the law and regulations.

C. Adoption of FY'18 Operating, Transportation and Capital Budgets

Chris Regan reported that since the public hearing, the expenditure budget was reduced by \$290,000. The district received a healthy E&D amount of \$839,955 of which \$46,771 is required to go back to the towns. \$136,000 including the \$46,771 will bring the FY17 assessments down. The towns will not see an increase from what they had appropriated.

Because of the \$500,000 contribution from E&D to the budget, the assessments to the towns will be lowered. The reduction in expenses and increase in revenue from E&D brings a total of \$390,000 reduction in assessments versus what was presented at the public hearing.

Mr. Flynn asked how many positions were being cut.

Chris Regan reported the following:

- 4 Unit A positions will be eliminated based on low class size
- The S. Egremont teacher will not be replaced.
- The part time Spanish teacher will not be replaced
- Work day reduction in a secretarial position is proposed

Mr. Flynn asked about administrator cuts. Ms. Regan informed him that at this time there were no administrator cuts. There will be a reduction of \$20,000 in building and grounds (because of retirement) and they are also looking at the possibility of shared services.

The Director of Technology will be working a shorter work year, a reduction of \$20,000.

The Assistant Principal was hired at 193 work days instead of 260 days, a savings in the FY17 budget which will carry forward to FY18.

Chris Regan explained each page in the budget presentation. Anticipating a \$430,000 Capital Project Bond repayment.

*Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, that the School Committee approve the FY18 Operating, Transportation and Capital Budgets, and Assessments as presented.*

Ms. Lartigue asked about the reduction in the Capital Expenditure Budget by \$10,000 bringing it to \$390,000.

Mr. Flynn noted that the motion needs to include a breakdown of the budget.

Mr. Sears then withdrew his motion.

*Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Lartigue, that the school committee approve the FY18 Operating, Transportation and Capital Budget as follows and to add the Capital Project Bond:*

***FY18 Budget***

• <i>Operating Expenditure Budget</i>	<i>\$ 14,226,297</i>
• <i>Transportation Expenditure Budget</i>	<i>\$ 1,320,416</i>
• <i>Capital Expenditure Budget</i>	<i>\$ 390,000</i>
• <i>Capital Project Bond Repayment</i>	<i>\$ 430,000</i>
<b><i>TOTAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET</i></b>	<b><i>\$16,366,713</i></b>

***FY18 Assessments***

• <i>Operating Assessment</i>	<i>\$11,629,486</i>
• <i>Transportation Assessment</i>	<i>\$ 733,940</i>
• <i>Capital Assessment</i>	<i>\$ 390,000</i>
• <i>Capital Project Interest Assessment</i>	<i>\$ 430,000</i>
<b><i>TOTAL TO BE ASSESSED</i></b>	<b><i>\$13,183,426</i></b>

Mr. Batacchi asked that the district look at the substitute budget again.

Ms. Brown urged that the budget include a line item for stabilization. She also asked if there was money in the budget for the Monterey School. Ms. Regan responded that there was no money allocated.

Mr. Flynn voiced his concern regarding the bond payment and the possible closure of the Egremont School.

Further discussion on the elimination of positions ensued. Mr. Flynn requested a copy of the bargaining unit contract.

***Roll Call Vote:***

*Mr. Flynn – No   Mr. Batacchi – Yes   Ms. Lartigue – Yes   Mr. Travis – Yes   Ms. Silvers – Yes*  
*Ms. Bush – Yes   Ms. Brown – No   Mr. Sears – Yes   Mr. Law – Yes*

*Motion carries 7 to 2.*

Mr. Sears left the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

3. A. Student Representative Report: Mary Shalaby, President of the freshman class and Angus Kerr, Vice President of the freshman class introduced themselves to the committee. They gave an update on the various fundraisers that had been held or ongoing. The bake sale raised \$130. Also organizing coin wars for the middle school.

Also planning a bingo night for the community as a fundraiser and working with their class advisors.

Grade 10 is working on a 5K; Grade 11 is working on Prom; Grade 12 is working on a single day senior trip.

Mr. Flynn left the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

#### D. Introduction Regarding Immigration Status of Students

Ms. Lartigue informed the school committee that she had been approached by a woman who works with immigrants in the area. There is concern amongst the immigrants and clinics are being set up in the area to address concerns. The Amherst Public District wrote the following preamble and resolution which Ms. Lartigue read aloud.

#### **Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) Resolution:**

#### **Rights of Undocumented Students and Protocol for ICE Access to Schools.**

The Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee is committed to the safety and success of every student in our district. The mission of the SBRSD includes a “commitment to creating an environment for learning that advances intellectual growth, creative thinking, relationships, and ethical behavior”. Additionally, the SBRSD “strives to create an emotionally and physically safe environment of courtesy, respect, and tolerance for all”.

The Committee believes that insuring the physical safety and emotional well-being of all of its students is tantamount to creating the kind of environment necessary for success. The District has a variety of policies already in place and does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying. (See Policy JB: Equal Access to Equal Educational Opportunities, JBA: Student-to-Student Harassment, JI Student Rights and Responsibilities, and JICFB: Bullying Prevention and Intervention.)

Our existing physical and emotionally safe environment would be significantly compromised by the presence of Immigration Control Enforcement employees should they come to any school building in the SBRSD for the purpose of removing students or their family members, or obtaining information about students and their families.

The Committee further believes that students’ emotional well-being and ability to successfully function in an educational environment would be negatively impacted by the removal of family members during Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office (ICE) activity that potentially could leave students without a guardian or supervising adult to provide care. The Committee feels that the SBRSD should have in place policies and procedures to protect and care for such students until a guardian or other designated adult is contacted, and that all teachers, administrators and staff should be trained in such procedures.

*Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, that the SBRSD adopt the following resolution. It was so voted unanimously.*

- 1. Existing District practice requires all visitors to notify the front office of their presence, reason for their visit, and be cleared for entry into the building. In alignment with existing District practice, any Immigration and Customs Enforcement employee intending to enter any school building in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District must first notify the Superintendent, in person, with adequate notice and copies of a warrant signed by a judge or magistrate so the*

*Superintendent can take steps to provide for the emotional and physical safety of its students and staff.*

2. *The Superintendent is authorized to ask for the ICE agent's credentials and request the warrant. If this information is not provided, the Superintendent will not allow ICE access to the school building.*
3. *Immigration Control Enforcement (ICE) personnel will be refused entry to any of the District's school buildings unless the Superintendent is provided with a warrant signed by a judge or magistrate authorizing ICE entry onto the property.*
4. *In accordance with existing federal and state law, Southern Berkshire Regional School District teachers and staff are reminded that they may not require students or parents to provide documentation to prove their immigration status or ask students or parents any questions that might reveal their undocumented status.*
5. *Southern Berkshire Regional School District teachers and staff will not refer students or families to ICE if they inadvertently or intentionally disclose their immigration status.*
6. *Within 72 hours of passing of this resolution, the Superintendent shall notify all teachers, administrators, staff and district families of the resolution and the District's commitment to maintaining a physically and emotionally safe environment for all of its students.*
7. *Within the next 60 days, the Superintendent shall develop an action plan:*
  - *Train teachers, administrators and staff on how to respond to ICE personnel who are requesting information about students and families and are attempting to enter the district property.*
  - *Develop procedures for notifying families about ICE efforts to gain information about students and families, and how to support students whose family members have been displaced because of ICE.*
  - *Additionally, the Policy Subcommittee of the SBRSD is charged with reviewing existing district policies regarding immigration and making any recommendations for new policies or changes to existing policies.*

A lengthy discussion ensued.

E. Superintendent's Report – Dave Hastings

**Community**

- a. **Gulotta's Mobil Support.** Joe and Sarah Gulotta presented Mt. Everett Principal Glenn Devoti with this year's **\$500.00 grant that the Science and Technology Department** will use to restore an electric vehicle that was used many year ago when Mount Everett participated in the *Tour de Sol*.
- b. **Elementary Parents' MCAS Information Night.** This week, Mary Turo and Jon Friedman hosted an Elementary Parents' MCAS Information night. Unfortunately, only one parent attended. Mary had assembled information and practice Elementary MCAS sample tests from DESE.
- c. **SADD Breakfast.** The SADD Breakfast will be on March 17<sup>th</sup> (St. Patrick's Day) from 6:30 – 8:00 AM. This will be in the Mount Everett Cafeteria. **IF YOU WEAR GREEN, YOU GET A \$1.00 DISCOUNT FROM THE REGULAR \$5.00 PRICE.**
- d. **Fund-Raiser for the Mount Everett Europe Trip.** Will be selling **Irish Soda Bread** at \$7.00 per loaf. The loaves will be distributed from March 13<sup>th</sup> to March 15<sup>th</sup>. Marya Makuc is one of the points of contact among students for placing orders.
- e. **Cabaret.** Last Friday's and Saturday's annual **Cabaret performances** were great successes. The house was sold out each night, and they had to turn some people away at the door.
  - Our food Service department provided the food, which included a gluten-free meal,

chicken and pasta meal and an egg plant and pasta meal.

- **Courtney English** said that this was one of the smoothest Cabaret in memory.
- **Caitlyn Herrick and Nolan Dupont** served as the co-hosts of the evening.
- **Beth Regulbuto**, the anticipated new Superintendent attended the Saturday performance and was able to chat with many district parents and stakeholders. Dan Kringer believes that the Cabaret raised over \$1,000.

**f. Parent Conferences in the High School Cafeteria:**

- **High School Parent Conferences:** Today (4-7 PM)
- **Grade 8 Parent Information Night/Ice Cream Social:** March 16<sup>th</sup> (6:30)
- **Grade 6 Parent Night/Ice Cream Social:** March 23 (6:30)

**Students**

**a. African Drumming and Dancing.** On Tuesday, the 4<sup>th</sup> grader performed a program of African drumming and dancing for the rest of the elementary students and many parents. **Berkshire Pulse** had been working with the students for the past month to prepare for the program. Both students and teachers from Undermountain and New Marlborough participated. The SBRSD web site has many pictures of the event.

**b. All-State Chorus.** **Eliza Maggio and Jesse Smerechniak** will be attending this year's **MMEA All-State Conference in Boston** as members of the Mixed Choir. The three-day event, which began today, will culminate in a concert in Symphony Hall Saturday evening.

**c. Middle School Robotics:** Our newly formed Middle School VEX Robotics team competed twice over the February break.

- The first event was at the **University of New Haven**. It was an all **high school** event other than us. But despite the age difference, the team was able to impress in their debut tournament coming in 30<sup>th</sup> place out of the 40 team field. The team came in every day over the February break and returned the following weekend with a much-improved robot.
- In the second event, the team competed at the **Southern New England Middle School Championship** and **finished 13<sup>th</sup> out of 46 teams, making it to the playoff round**. It was a truly impressive effort for the nine 7<sup>th</sup> graders that began this robotics program only on January 4<sup>th</sup>. **The team was featured twice in the Berkshire Eagle, prominently in the February 20<sup>th</sup> edition.**
- In conjunction with this program, Paul O'Brien and Chris Thompson are working with the **Berkshire STEM Pipeline** to encourage BCC to formulate a VEX University team that would be part of their STEM academy and in turn would mentor local schools in robotics.
- Our middle school team will be demonstrating their VEX robot at the Lego robotics tournament in **Lenox on March 25<sup>th</sup>**.
- Senior **Jordan Chretien** was recently accepted to the **BCC STEM Academy** due to his work on the high school team.

**d. Washington, DC Trip.** On Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade left for the annual Washington, D.C., field trip. The group will return on Friday.

**e. Railroad Street Youth Project Workshop, April 6<sup>th</sup>.** This is an annual conference sponsored by the Railroad Street Youth Project. The theme this year is "**Envisioning Your Future**". I am confident our students will represent Mount Everett with pride: Jaclyn Derwitsch, Carly Duval, Cole Duval, Gay Duval, Devin Galli, Caitlyn Herrick, Jacob Makuc, Emma Mitchell, Maya Neski, Bethany Rhoades, Madison Ullrich.

- f. **Academy Day, April 29<sup>th</sup>.** Congressman Neal's Academy Day will take place this year at Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee on April 29th. Students interested in pursuing a military academy education will attend a forum and learn about the Military Academy Nominations and Appointments process. Seats in academies are very, very competitive and result in a commission at graduation.

Dave Travis asked anyone is aware of anything going on in the background regarding opting out. Are there any attempts to counteract opting out. Mr. Travis asked if we were reaching out to the families who had opted out last year. Ms. Lartigue informed everyone that this year Mary Turo has proactively reached out to the parents and that the relationship between the administration and parents is more open this year.

Further discussion on how the district can be more proactive with regard to the opt out situation. It is not good to be a level 3 district when it not an earned level.

F. Subcommittee Reports:

- a. Finance Subcommittee – Already discussed.
- b. Building, Grounds and Technology – Already discussed.
- c. Executive Evaluation Subcommittee – Bonnie Silvers  
Ms. Silvers informed the committee that Beth Regulbuto is in possession of a contract. She was very pleased and excited to be joining our district.  
The search was conducted under budget.  
The Executive Evaluation Subcommittee will focus on the transition now.

Mr. Stewart informed everyone that the Attorneys had drafted a contract and forwarded it to Ms. Regulbuto. We should have a contract well before the next school committee meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

G. Financial Updates – Chris Regan

- a. Transfers as needed
- b. Vote to Approve District Warrants  
*Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to approve district warrants as submitted per warrant subcommittee meeting of 2/24/17. It was so voted unanimously.*

**5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC / REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

6. **ADJOURN:**

*Ms. Lartigue moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. It was so voted, unanimously.*

**Documents presented at this meeting:**

- Agenda meeting #1522
- Minutes of meeting #1520 and 1521
- Overnight Field Trip Permission Forms
- FY18 Operating, Transportation and Capital Budgets
- Preamble and Resolution – Rights of Undocumented Students and Protocol for ICE access
- Warrants Signed – 2/24/17